



The Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 14, 2021

The Service of Holy Eucharist on Zoom @ 9 am
The Visitation by The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher,
Bishop of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Repentance
upon the conclusion of the Sacred Ground series

*God our light, make your Church like a rainbow
shining and proclaiming to all the world that the storm is at an end,
there is peace for those who seek it and love for the forgiving.*

-from A New Zealand Prayer Book

Ministers of the Liturgy

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher

Our Youth

Allison Kee, Emily Kee, Nathan Pirelli, Teagan Richards, Zoey Richards,
Anna Prevelige, Lauren Ruggiero, Landon Sweet

Musicians: Randy Bloom, Mary Johnson, Jeff Lukas, Cathy Poch

Organ Prelude

As Jesus hung upon the cross

Samuel Scheidt

The Penitential Order: A Litany of Repentance

Bishop Fisher

Blessed be the God of our salvation:

Who bears our burdens and forgives our sins.

Bishop Fisher:

As you conclude your participation in the Sacred Ground program, and in the assurance of forgiveness, let us bow down before God and humbly confess our sins of complicity and complacency in the perpetuation of injustice. *Silence.*

Anna Prevelige

God the Father, you freed your people from slavery in Egypt, and yet the legacy of slavery deforms our lives today. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet

God the Son, you prayed that all would be united in your love and service, yet the divisions among us pull us away from you. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige

God the Holy Spirit, you inspire us to live peaceably with all, yet our history darkens our striving for justice. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet We have harmed one another and the earth through negligence and self-interest. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige We have chosen comfort over conflict and ignored the cries of those harmed by our complacency. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet We have not shared the good things we have been given and we have blamed the poor for their poverty. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige We have been fearful and distrustful of those who are different from us. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet We have separated ourselves from others and have not listened to their experience. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige We have been indifferent to the pain and suffering of our sisters and brothers. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet We have held in contempt those who need our help and not loved them with our whole hearts. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige We have preferred order over justice and isolation over the struggle for peace. **Have mercy on us.**

Landon Sweet We have quietly held good intentions and not proclaimed the message of reconciliation. **Have mercy on us.**

Anna Prevelige We have failed to act with courage for the sake of love. **Have mercy on us.**

Bishop Fisher: May Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Mary Johnson

Healy Willan

Lord Have mercy upon me.

Christ has mercy upon me.

Lord have mercy upon me.

Allison Kee Collect of the Day

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from the Book of Numbers [21:4-9]

Reader #1: Lauren Ruggiero From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses,

Reader #2: Emily Kee “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we hate this miserable food!”

Reader #1: Lauren Ruggiero Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said,

Reader #2: Emily Kee “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.”

Reader #1: Lauren Ruggiero So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses,

Reader #3: Nathan Pirelli “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who has been bitten shall look at it and live.”

Reader #1: Lauren Ruggiero So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Nathan Pirelli & Lauren Ruggiero Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, *

and his mercy endures for ever.

2 Let all those whom the Lord has redeemed proclaim *

that he redeemed them from the hand of the foe.

3 He gathered them out of the lands; *

from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. . . .

17 Some were fools and took to rebellious ways; *

they were afflicted because of their sins.

18 They abhorred all manner of food *

and drew near to death's door.

19 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, *

and he delivered them from their distress.

20 He sent forth his word and healed them *

and saved them from the grave.

- 21 Let them give thanks to the Lord for his mercy *
and the wonders he does for his children.
- 22 Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and tell of his acts with shouts of joy.

Allison Kee & Emily Kee

A Reading from the Letter to the Ephesians [2:1-10]

based on Eugene Peterson Translation

Allison Not so long ago you were stuck in an old boring life of sin. You let the world, which doesn't know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, each of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. It's a wonder that God didn't lose his temper and punish the whole lot of us.

Emily Instead, with wonderful mercy and incredible love, God embraced us. God took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. By grace he raised us up to the highest heaven, in the company of Jesus our Messiah, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, not because of anything you did to earn it. It is the gift of God-- not the result of works, so that no one may boast about what we have achieved. For we are created in Christ Jesus to share his work, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Anna Prevelige & Landon Sweet

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ According to John [3:14-21]

Glory to you, Lord Christ

Anna Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so that people could have something to see and then believe, it is now necessary for the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who looks up to him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed. By believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to tell the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is forgiven; anyone who refuses to trust him has already for a long time been under a death sentence without knowing it.

Landon And this is the crisis we are in: that the light streamed into the world but people everywhere ran for the darkness. They went for the darkness because they were more interested in pleasing themselves than in pleasing God. Everyone who makes a practice of

doing evil, clinging to denial and illusion, hates the light of God and won't come near it, fearing what it will show. But anyone working and living in truth welcomes the light of God so that the work of God can be seen for the beauty and peace that it brings.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you Lord Christ.**

Sermon

Nathan Pirelli The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Teagan & Zoey Richards The Prayers of the People

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Park Ridge IL

Holy God, we pray for our family, friends, and pets. We pray that they stay healthy, safe and happy and that they know we love them.

God hears me when I pray.

Holy God, we pray for doctors, teachers, and all the adults who guide us. We pray that they keep believing in what they are teaching and that they help us to grow. We pray that teachers make sure we are learning and doing our homework. We pray that they know we respect them.

God hears me when I pray.

Holy God, we pray for our President and our government leaders. We pray they are honest and open to new ideas. We pray they learn how to work together.

God hears me when I pray

Holy God, we pray for people who need help, people who can't be helped and people who don't know they need help. We pray that they are not afraid.

God hears me when I pray

Holy God, we pray for those who have died, especially those who have died as a result of COVID-19. [pause]

God hears me when I pray

Holy God, we pray for ourselves. Help us to find the path you have chosen for us. Keep us believing in ourselves and remind us you love us and watch over us every day.

God hears me when I pray

Holy God, we pray for the world. Keep the world clean, safe and peaceful. Let everyone get along and build friendships.

God hears me when I pray

Out of all the people in this great big world

God knows my voice and God hears me when I pray.

Holy God, when you who created the universe you said, "Let there be light." We pray that the light inside our hearts will blot out the darkness of this world and that You Lord may shine everywhere. **Amen.**

A Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment for the work of Sacred Ground:

Bishop Fisher

Dear People of God, we stand in the shadow of the prophets crying out for justice and peace. God calls us to be a people of reconciliation, serving a world in need and confronting injustice. Mary Johnson led ten members of your community to join with friends and companions from St. Matthew's, the United Parish of Upton, and the Milford community to study, pray, and share their stories as we all continue to grow into the Beloved Community that God has called us to be: We give thanks for the ministry of Beth Moeller, Mary Frances Best, Charlie Johnson, Matt McGuinness, Cindi Scrimgeour, Michelle Madden, Pam Hennessy, Peter Hennessy, and Katherine Cote:

Let us pray:

Holy and Loving God, We give thanks for the courage and commitment of these your servants. Guide them as they continue to discern your call to stand up and speak out for the least and the lowest. Grant all of us the strength and wisdom take risks for the sake of God's love, moving beyond ourselves in order to seek and serve Christ and one another. In your abundant love, make us compassionate in our actions and courageous in our works, that we may see Christ's Beloved Community in our own day. **Amen.**

The Peace

Offertory Hymn

Jeff Lukas

Offertory Sentence

All things come of thee O Lord ; and of thine own have we given thee.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

We praise you and we thank you, O holy and living God, Creator of heaven and earth, for the gift of a world full of wonder and for our life which comes from you. Through Jesus Christ you gather us into one great family and you bid us to cleanse our hearts and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, we may come to the fullness of grace that you have prepared for us.

Therefore with all who serve you on earth and in heaven, we praise your wonderful name as we say:

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of our God.

Hosanna in the highest.

O God, from before time you made ready the creation. Through your Wisdom, your Spirit moved over the deep and brought to birth the heavens: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; growing things, both plants and animals; and finally humankind. You made us in your image, male and female, to love and care for the earth and its creatures as you love and care for us, your children. You graced us with freedom of heart and mind, but we were heedless and willful. You took us by the hand, and taught us to walk in your ways. And although you led us with cords of compassion and bands of love, we wandered far away. Yet as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

Then you acted anew in Creation. In order that we might see and know the riches of your grace, your Spirit entered into Mary, the maiden of Nazareth, that she might conceive and bear a Son, the holy child of God. The world had waited long in pain and hope, and at last our Savior came to birth, fulfilling the promise of the reign of God in love. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He yearned to draw all the world to himself, yet we would not. We were heedless of his call to walk in love. At last the time came for him to offer himself, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

After supper, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again he gave thanks to you, and gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.

As we gather to share the bread and the cup, we remember his loving gift to us:

***We remember his death on the cross,
We proclaim the resurrection to new life,
We await the return of Christ in glory.***

And we join together in the love of Christ to give thanks and praise to you, our God. Here at this table, from a distance, we offer to you all that you have made: this bread and this cup, our time and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your love and your blessing on all we offer here. Breathe your Spirit onto these gifts of bread and wine, to make of them the Body and Blood of Christ. Let your Spirit dwell within us. Gather us to be your holy people, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made. Draw us, O God, to your heart at the heart of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Teagan Richards The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. **Amen.**

The priest breaks the consecrated Bread. After a brief silence, all say together:

Landon Sweet *Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.*
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us
Jesus, redeemer of the world, give us your peace.

The Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

During the Communion hymn families take part in Communion at home with the pre-consecrated wafers distributed before the service, praying in thanksgiving for the Life we share in Christ.

Communion Hymn

All who hunger gather gladly

WLP #761

soloist Cathy Poch

Emily Kee Post-Communion Prayer

Faithful and Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and feeding us with spiritual food in this Holy Communion as we gather at this altar from a distance. Now send us forth, a community forgiven, healed, and renewed, that we may proclaim your love to the world.
Amen.

Bishop Fisher The Blessing

Bow down before the Lord.

Look down in mercy, Lord, on your people who kneel before you; an grant that those whom you have nourished by your Word an Sacrament may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bishop Fisher The Dismissal

Go now to follow the way of Jesus: see others as he did; dare to give freely as he did; to resist temptation as he did; and to love unconditionally as he did. **Thanks be to God.**